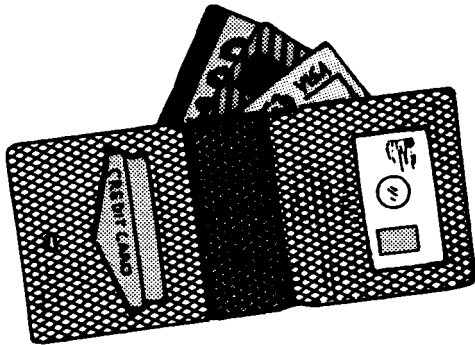


Embezzlement and pilferage by employees can cause you lots of problems. Cashiers may use "short ring ups"—ringing up a lower price on the sales register to cover money they've taken from the till. Or they may overcharge customers and pocket the difference, or undercharge other employees and friends.

Embezzlement can go from simply overloading of expense accounts, to payments made to non-existent suppliers, to complicated juggling of the company books.

### Watch out for these signals:

- Records are rewritten so they'll look neater
- Inventory shortages are increasing in size or frequency
- Employees refuse vacations or promotions
- Business patterns change when a certain employee is absent
- Customers complain about errors in monthly statements
- Collections decline
- Employees seem sensitive to routine questions about procedures



### Credit Card Fraud

People have come up with hundreds of ways to swindle, cheat, and steal from businesses. One way is with credit cards. More and more people are using credit cards. More and more crooks use them too. Here are a few of the recognized tips to keep those with criminal intent out of the credit card business.

- Watch out for the card that has been altered, has expired, or is not yet valid
- The card attempting to be used is on the issuer's warning list

- Signatures on the card and the sales slip at the point of purchase don't match
- The customer makes several purchases in the same department, all under the amount that would require an authorization call to the card issuer

### Check Fraud

Another significant loss of profit for those in business is check fraud. Unfortunately, there are a number of ways that fraudulent or stolen checks can "bounce" into your business. Stolen checks can be forged. Legitimate checks might be altered to show much higher amounts.

Send those trying to accomplish check fraud a message that their practices won't work at your place of business if you note the following:

- The check writer has trouble with his/her signature
- The check appears to be altered
- The date on the check is old
- The check cashier can't produce adequate identification—preferably a photo I.D.
- The person writing the check attempts to distract or rush a salesperson or teller

Crime prevention in the business setting can be effective. It doesn't have to cost much. Good management practices are probably the best insurance against all kinds of crime.

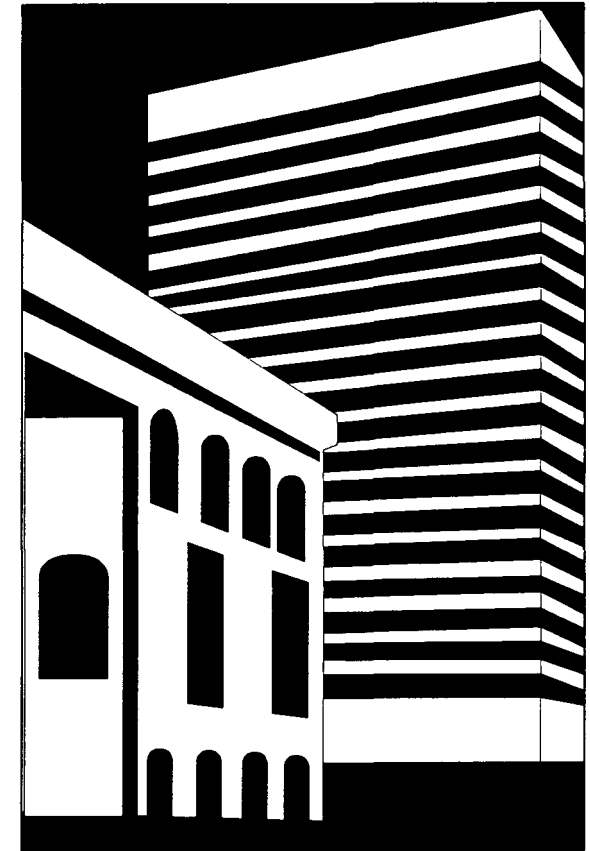
There are a number of good publications providing information on how you can make your business more secure. One is "Security and the Small Business Retailer," a publication of the National Institute of Justice.

The handbook can be purchased from the Government Printing Office for \$4.50. Just send a check or money order to Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20401, Specify stock number 027-000-00765-1

**Be sure to always contact your local law enforcement agency for its assessment of any of your crime prevention efforts.**

This brochure provided by the Virginia Crime Prevention Association through a contract with the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

# Business Security



### Virginia Crime Prevention Association

**4914 Radford Avenue  
Suite 306  
Richmond, Virginia 23230**

**(804) 359-8120  
FAX (804) 359-1705**

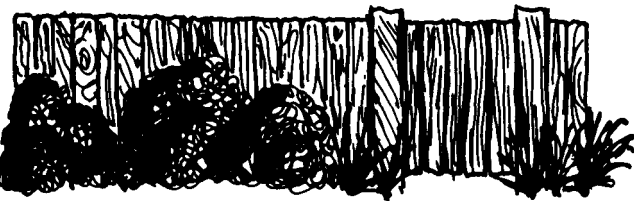
## Why Business Security?

Crime against business is escalating. In fact, businesses lose over \$30 billion each year in this country to crime. Burglary. Robbery. Shoplifting. Employee Theft. Fraud. These are the crimes that keep your business from being all it could be, for you, your employees, your customers, and the community where you operate.

## Putting a Stop to Burglary

Perhaps more than any other crime, burglary is a crime of opportunity. The longer it takes a burglar to break into your place of business, the greater the probability he won't break into your business. Why? Because the burglar is in a race with time. He doesn't want to be seen and if he stays too long at a location trying to break-in, chances decrease that will happen. To keep burglars away from your business, make their work difficult, risky, and low-profit.

Start your crime prevention program from the outside and work your way in—just as a burglar would. Give your business a thorough security appraisal and then take the necessary corrective actions.



## Walls, Shrubbery and Fences

Walls, shrubbery and fences can have a place in crime prevention. However, experts say building a fortress may not be your best protection against crime. Secluded areas, invisible to passers-by, are a burglar's delight. He can take his time with little fear of being seen. The key is to keep trespassers out while keeping your property visible.

The National Crime Prevention Coalition makes these recommendations:

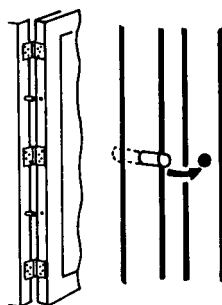
- Use picket fences or chain link fences. Everything that goes on within is clearly seen.
- Plant hedges no more than waist high. Prickly or thorny bushes can help keep trespassers out.
- Trim low limbs from trees close to the building. Burglars can climb trees to enter from a second story or roof.

## Lighting, Doors, Locks, etc.

It is important that your business be properly lighted both inside and out. In fact, light may be one of the best crime deterrents. The rule of thumb is to light up all dark areas, especially doors and windows. Also, watch for shadows that can conceal a burglar's activity.

Burglars try the easiest entrance first—doors and windows. If your doors and windows can't quickly be pried open, chances are the burglar will move on.

Hollow core doors offer little protection. Make sure your doors are of sturdy construction. Next, check the door frames. The frames must be solidly built, or a burglar will open the door by prying off part of the frame. If the hinges on your door are exposed to the outside, make sure the hinge pins cannot be removed or pin the hinges to prevent removal.

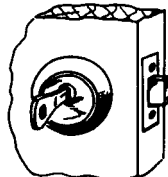


Pin the door to the frame by:

- Inserting screw or framing nail into back edge of door, protruding at least 1/2", midway between the top and center hinges.
- Drilling opposing hole in door jamb to receive the screw or nail after the door is closed.

The hinge pins may be removed, but the door will be held firmly in place.

The best locks have one common feature—a deadbolt. A deadbolt is a steel bar, at least one inch long, which extends from the door into the frame when the door is locked. The strike plate should be attached to the door frame with screws that measure three inches.



The bolt should be at least one inch long.

Deadbolt Lock

The double cylinder deadbolt lock requires a key to open from either side. This prevents burglars from breaking glass in the door and reaching through to turn the knob from the inside, it also prevents them from exiting through the door if they've entered through some other means.

Remember, though, a double cylinder deadbolt can also block your exit in an emergency. Check with your local law enforcement agency or building inspector to see if these locks are permitted in your area.

## Key control

Any lock gives way to a key, that's why it's so important to practice good key control in your business.

- Label keys, using a code to indicate backdoor, receiving door, display case, etc.
- Engrave "Do Not Duplicate" on all keys; most locksmiths will observe this instruction.
- Restrict access to keys to your most trusted employees. Maintain a log to record removal and return.
- Consider having locks re-keyed when an employee leaves your business.

## Windows

The most vulnerable part of any business is glass. Some communities indicate that well over half of all business-related burglaries occur when someone breaks the glass of a window or door and enters the facility.

All rear and side windows to your business should be removed or covered with either iron bars or very strong wire mesh.

Large windows overlooking busy streets can be preventive devices in themselves—again, the burglar's greatest enemy is visibility. Don't obstruct the view by stacking boxes in front of windows or cluttering them with signs or posters.

If you have large display windows, consider the use of burglary-resistant glass. For many businesses this cost can be easily justified.

## Alarms

Some businesses may need to install an alarm. Before you buy, weigh the cost against your need. How valuable is your merchandise? How great is your risk? It might be best to seek a premise security survey by your local law enforcement agency or check with a reputable professional security consultant.

## Employee Theft

Some experts believe businesses lose more to employee theft than to burglary, robbery, and shoplifting combined. Examine your management practices. Do what you can to make your employees feel that they have a stake in your business. Hopefully, if that happens they won't be tempted to steal it away.